

On April 13, 2023, I happily donated my kidney to Beth, my best friend from childhood, maid of honor at my wedding, and mother of my favorite godson. She needed a kidney after contracting a very rare autoimmune disease called Anti-GBM/Goodpasture Syndrome in June of 2022. This disease attacks your kidneys and causes acute kidney failure. After a long hospital stay, Beth was finally able to return home only to start dialysis 5 days/week. Dialysis started to take a toll on her physically and mentally.

Beth and I had lost another childhood friend in 2020, Lucy, who also needed a new kidney. Unfortunately, I was not a match for Lucy. When Beth became ill, I said to myself, "I cannot lose another dear friend. And I cannot imagine growing old without my best friend either." I figured I'd been through this process before and could do it again. Go get tested! And I couldn't believe it when I got the word that I was a match! After a very emotional call with Beth, we scheduled our surgery. My turbo kidney (as she calls it) started working immediately, and we left the hospital full of enormous hope and happiness. I was so gratified that Beth could attend her oldest son's college graduation her youngest son's high school graduation, and resume LIVING again. We look forward to many years and laughs together as we grow old gracefully while sharing a set of kidneys.

I'm doing this climb to show that anyone can be a kidney donor and still take on amazing new challenges and opportunities. Although I try to live the healthiest life I can, I don't have any special talents or traits that make me a better kidney donor than anyone else. Although I love all forms of physical fitness, I've never done a hike like the one I'll be undertaking in January. But no matter how challenging this hike is or how I may feel during it, I will know that it's nothing compared to what people with kidney failure experience daily. And that will keep me climbing and keep me promoting and advocating living kidney donation.

Half the kidneys, twice the strength!!